

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion and in view of the present amendment, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4 and 5 have been amended. New claims 11-14 are added by the present amendment. Claims 1-14 are pending in the application.

I. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112

In the Office Action, at page 2, numbered paragraph 2, claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. The Examiner stated that “opposite to said stationary platen about said first and second movable platens” is unclear and indefinite.

Applicants have amended claims 4 and 5 to recite “opposite to said stationary platen, said first and second movable platens being movably arranged between the stationary platen and the end frame.” Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the § 112 rejection be withdrawn.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, at page 3, paragraph 6, claims 1, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0017230 A1 to Yoshinaga et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed because Yoshinaga does not teach or suggest

a second movable platen separate from said first movable platen and abutting said first movable platen at least when said clamping mechanism is in a mold-clamping state, and arranged movably relative to said stationary platen along said guiding axis,

as recited in independent claim 1, for example.

In a non-limiting example, the present application is a clamping mechanism with guide bars fixed to a stationary platen mounted on a bed and a first and second movable platen arranged movably relative to the stationary platen. The second movable platen is separate from the first platen and abuts the first movable platen when the clamping mechanism is in a mold-clamping state. A drive section applies force to the second movable platen. A connecting member connects the first and second movable platens to each other. A support structure is interposed between the guide bar and the first movable platen and movable supports the first movable platen on the guide bar.

While Yoshinaga does discuss a clamping mechanism with guide bars fixed to a

stationary platen mounted on a bed and a first and second movable platen arranged movably relative to the stationary platen, Yoshinaga does not discuss or suggest “a second movable platen separate from said first movable platen and abutting said first movable platen at least when said clamping mechanism is in a mold-clamping state.” Nor does Yoshinaga explicitly discuss or suggest “a support structure interposed between said guide bar and said first movable platen, and movably supporting said first movable platen on said guide bar along said guiding axis.”

Therefore, as Yoshinaga does not discuss or suggest a second movable platen “abutting said first movable platen at least when said clamping mechanism is in a mold-clamping state,” as set forth in claim 1, claim 1 is patentable over the art cited.

Regarding the rejection of claims 7 and 8, these claims depend from claim 1 and include all the features of that claim, plus additional features that are not taught or suggested by the prior art. For example, claim 7 recites that “said connecting member connects said first and second movable platens in a manner shiftable along said guiding axis relative to each other,” and claim 8 recites “a biasing member interposed between said first and second movable platens, said biasing member elastically biasing said first and second movable platens away from each other along said guiding axis.” Therefore, it is submitted that claims 7 and 8 patentably distinguish over the reference relied upon.

In the Office Action, at page 4, numbered paragraph 7, claims 1, 2 and 4-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Yoshinaga in view of EP 1,136,220. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Regarding claim 1, as discussed above, Yoshinaga fails to discuss or suggest all of the features of independent claim 1. In particular, Yoshinaga fails to discuss “a second movable platen separate from said first movable platen and abutting said first movable platen at least when said clamping mechanism is in a mold-clamping state.” Applicants respectfully submit that EP 1,136,220 fails to make up for this deficiency. While EP ‘220 does discuss a mold clamping mechanism with guide bars fixed to a stationary platen mounted on a bed, EP ‘220 does not discuss or suggest “a second movable platen separate from said first movable platen and abutting the first movable platen at least in a mold-clamping state.”

Therefore, as Yoshinaga does not teach or suggest a second movable “abutting the first movable platen at least in a mold-clamping state,” as set forth in claim 1, and EP ‘220 fails to make up for this deficiency, claim 1 is patentable over the art cited.

Regarding the rejection of claims 2 and 4-8, as explained above, the Yoshinaga

reference does not discuss or suggest the features of claim 1. These features are also not discussed or suggested by reference EP '220. Further, claims 2 and 4-8 depend from claim 1 and include all the features of that claim, plus additional features that are not discussed or suggested by the references relied upon. Therefore, as these claims are dependent on independent claim 1, they are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the reasons noted above.

III. Allowable Material

The Examiner indicated that claims 3, 9 and 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants are appreciative of such an indication, and therefore claims 3, 9 and 10 have been rewritten in independent form as claims 12-14.

IV. New Claims

New claim 11 depends from amended claim 1 and further recites that "the second movable platen selectively abuts said first movable platen." Nothing in the references relied upon discusses or suggests such. It is submitted that the new claim distinguishes over the references relied upon.

New claims 12-14, as discussed above, correspond to prior claims 3, 9 and 10 rewritten in independent form.

Conclusion

In accordance with the foregoing, the claims 1, 4 and 5 have been amended. Claims 11-14 have been added. Claims 1-14 are pending and under consideration.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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